

Mrs. Hall's 'Coldness' Only a Shield to Hide Hurts and Protect Willie

*Like a Modern Electra,
She Found Happiness in
Mother-Like Affection*



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What does this eccentricity amount to, and how does it manifest itself?

It seems that Willie grew up to be the mortification of his family, especially his younger sister, Frances, because he insisted upon doing things in his own peculiar way. He persisted in such a measure that those who came in contact with him, unable to recognize him as a man intellectually well able to deviate from the trodden paths of conventional life as lived in New Brunswick, N. J., came to consider him an odd fellow, a "nut."

Probably if Willie had lived in Greenwich Village, New York city, he would have been hailed as a remarkably interesting chap, an "original" character, a man very much sought after and "the life of the party" at any kind of affair.

Freer spirits than those bred in small towns would undoubtedly have come to appreciate him as an amiable "enfant terrible," with quite a mixture of Parsifal.

Fear Unknown to Him

In New York, for example, he could have chased after fire engines to his heart's content without attracting any more attention than a great number of sedate business men, well known as confirmed "buffs," as these habitual followers of the clanging fire engine are called in the metropolis.

Like the guileless knight of the Holy Grail, Parsifal, Willie never knew fear. Nothing ruffles him. He is always perfectly unconcerned. Seemingly he looks at life from a higher point of van-

tage than the multitude. That may be the case because, perhaps, he had the good fortune of being brought up without the injurious influence of complex-inducing tales of the shudder variety.

At any rate, Willie grew up, never giving a hoot about what other people may think about him or his ways. He possesses a sympathetic mannerism, ingratiating himself with almost everybody, as proved by the fact that nearly every one calls him Willie. Never does he give offense.

Worry Increases Love

But being "Willie himself," he became a veritable "child of sorrow" to his sister Frances.

It is here that the most interesting relations between Mrs. Hall and Willie present themselves.

There is no doubt that the unconventional Willie, untouched by the trembling finger of fear, became the bang of his ultra-conventional sister's existence. Recognizing the fact that Willie stood out from the rank and file, she trained herself not to notice when other people laughed about her brother. He continually gave her cause for worry, but THE MORE SHE WORRIED ABOUT HIM, THE MORE SHE LOVED HIM.

The spiritual relations between Willie and his sister are strikingly illustrated by two little intermezzi enacted during the trial.

Her Marriage Analyzed

The first of them took place in the courtroom, when Willie, flushed with pride for having floored Senator Simpson, left the



Willie Stevens, nervous and distraught, while waiting his turn to go on the stand, is depicted above in two characteristic attitudes. His sister, Mrs. Frances Stevens Hall, wife of the slain Rev. Dr. Hall, is shown bestowing upon him one of the many smiles of encouragement that fortified Willie and enabled him on the witness stand to discomfit the state's prosecutor.

witness stand and, passing Mrs. Hall, asked his sister, after the manner of a proud schoolboy bringing home an excellent report, "Was I all right?"

Here he displayed an almost childlike dependence on his sister. But the second incident proves that Willie is after all the older brother. He reassuringly patted his sister on the shoulder and kissed her affectionately when she took the stand in her own defense.

That Willie remained single, while his sister married comparatively late, is another illustration of their Electra-Orestes relations.

As touched upon before, in worrying over her brother Willie, Frances Stevens evidently gratified her inborn maternal instincts to such an extent that for the longest time she was deflected from fulfilling her destiny as a woman. She married not only comparatively late but also—very significant—a man seven years her junior, and looking even younger!

Now, it is a well known fact, speaking in a biological sense, that a girl of 16 is a woman, while a boy of 16 is just a young lad. This disparity between age and maturity is intensified in later years, only to vanish at the threshold of dotage.

While in cases where the man is older than the woman, the difference in age may safely be considered as only half the number of years that actually separate the two, in cases where the woman is older the intervening years should really count as double. On this basis—mathematically wrong, but biologically correct—Dr. Hall was fourteen years younger than Frances Stevens, and not merely seven.

Hall's Love Too Weak

Marrying the Rev. Dr. Hall was Frances Stevens's great chance to redeem her warped psychological make-up. Had Dr. Hall proved to be the right mate for her, her maternal cravings would have found the natural outlet.

With the brother complex re-

placed by the complexities of motherhood, her brother Willie would have had to take a back seat. But like Hedda Gabler, in Henrik Ibsen's play, Frances Stevens, even as Mrs. Hall, still remained Frances Stevens. There is a strong possibility that all the years of her motherly, rather than sisterly, worry over her so-called eccentric brother had hindered Mrs. Hall from making a successful wife to her husband.

Whether the Rev. Edward W. Hall proposed to Frances Stevens—actually only seven, but biologically twice as many years his senior—merely on account of her station in life, or whether he really loved her; whether Frances Stevens accepted Dr. Hall while under the spell of a brother complex or whether she really loved him, there is the possibility that Dr. Hall, as a husband, became discouraged by a probable coldness in his wife's attitude toward him—a direct result of her overpowering Electra complex. It is also possible that Dr. Hall's love was not strong enough to help his wife to overcome her complex.

Between Two Complexes

At any rate, the resulting conditions induced him to venture beyond the pale of matrimonial discretion, in this way precipitating the still unsolved riddle of De Russeys Lane.

When finally Frances Stevens had become the wife of the Rev. Edward W. Hall, the most critical moment in her life had arrived. At that time, she had two outstanding complexes, resulting from the same source: a fear complex, and a brother complex.

As automatically every complex in us creates an anti-complex, is compensated—balanced—as psychoanalysis terms it, Frances Stevens Hall, to bear up under the mortification of her brother's behavior, which she looked upon as shameful eccentricity, developed an over-compensated fear complex; that is, she not only forced herself to repress her fear, but she went

even much further, girding herself with an imperturbability and self-control which even so shrewd a forensic luminary as Senator Simpson mistook for cold-bloodedness.

Out of the Chrysalis

As a compensated fear complex will automatically make itself felt so much stronger the more the fear grows—that is, the more frightened inwardly, the sterner outwardly—Mrs. Hall appeared a stone-hearted creature before the bar. But during all the time she was derided and derided as a cold-blooded woman she was in reality obsessed by fear.

Willie, on the other hand, generally—but for no valid reason whatever—considered a man of limited mental capacity, probably for the first time in his life was offered an opportunity to disclose his real personality at the trial. Absolutely free from fear, no bullying would intimidate him.

While his sister appeared more composed than ever—but in reality, was more and more obsessed by an overpowering fear—Willie's equanimity increased, his brain becoming more agile all the time.

Love That Moves Mountains

He easily proved himself a very methodical thinker, fully able to come out of a grueling cross-examination, with a thoroughly surprised and disappointed prosecutor of shrewdest caliber to his credit.

If the Electra theory of Dr. Freud holds true in the case of Frances and Willie Stevens, these two severely tried victims of an as yet unexplained murder mystery may look forward to years of devotion for each other. This mutual fondness will be so much more profound since the experiences of the last years have no doubt taught Willie Stevens as well as his sister, Mrs. Hall, that a love like theirs is strong enough—as the Bible says—to "remove mountains."